

SPECIAL EDITION: TASK FORCE OVERVIEWS

Guardian

Volume 11, Issue 1

KFOR Multi-National Brigade (East)

February 9th, 2005

Looking Back & Heading Home

***KFOR 6A Rotation Reflects on Training,
Kosovo, and Making a Difference***

CAMP ATTERBURY • CAMP HOHENFELS



Bless You?

*Be courteous to others and please try to keep
your germs to yourself.*

Contents

GUARDIAN MAGAZINE • VOLUME XI, NUMBER 12
February 9th, 2005

Departments

- 4 **Leaders Notes**
by Brig. Gen. Tod Carmony
- 5 **Quicktime**

Tour Reviews

- 10 **Task Force Falcon**
by Sgt. Benjamin Hokkanen
- 14 **Task Force Lancer**
by Spc. Ian Blake
- 16 **Task Force Med**
by Spc. Ian Blake
- 18 **Task Force Phoenix**
by Spc. Adam Dielschneider
- 20 **Task Force Protector**
by Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Duran
- 22 **Task Force Shield**
by Sgt. Benjamin Hokkanen
- 24 **Parting Shots**



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. JEFFREY DURAN



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. JEFFREY DURAN

- 6 **Atterbury Training**
Preparations for deployment
by Spc. Ian Blake
- 8 **Hohenfels Training**
Exercise tested 6A readiness
by Sgt. Benjamin Hokkanen

On the Cover:

Soldiers practice hand-to-hand combat at Camp Atterbury, Ind.

COVER PHOTO BY SPC. IAN BLAKE

Final words from the CG

Since this is the last Guardian that KFOR 6A will be able to read while here, I want to thank the Guardian staff for the fine job they have done telling us about Kosovo and about the most important thing here, our Soldiers.

To the Soldiers of Task Force Falcon 6A I give my thanks for a job well done. You have safely and professionally completed our peacekeeping mission here in Multinational Brigade - East. Be proud of your many accomplishments. Your service here was important to our nation and to the people of Kosovo. The peace process in areas that have been in conflict for a number of years is never fast. It takes years of effort and hard work. We need to cherish each and every accomplishment we have made no matter how small they may seem to be. Each step moves Kosovo to sustainable peace.

Some of these steps are included in the following accomplishments we achieved during our rotation. We have conducted more out-of-sector operations than any other rotation. We have also had out-of-sector reinforcements and over-the-horizon reinforcements in our sector at the same time. The first synchronized patrol along the ABL with Serbia within MNB-E occurred under our watch. The people of Kosovo held their provincial elections on their own here first time in October and did it without violence. MNB-E is the first brigade area able to state that all KPS stations are under the control of Kosovo citizens. Each of these things could not have been done without the efforts of each and every Soldier doing their job in a professional, proficient manner.

To the soldiers of our multinational partners; working with you has been one of the highlights of our mission here. Your dedication and service to the cause of peace is commendable. To bring so many nations together and work for a common cause and have such success amazes me.

To the Soldiers of Task Force Falcon 6B; the mission will soon be yours. Please make full use of the lessons learned by TFF 6A so you may start at a high level of situational understanding and build on what previous rotations have done. Get to know our multinational partners here in the sector. You will find them full members of the team and very experienced, as some have had more than four tours here. Get to know the people of Kosovo. You will build friendships with them that will last the remainder of your days. Every soldier in this taskforce has a story about how a Kosovo citizen has impacted his or her life. Welcome them as they will welcome you. Our best wishes and prayers go out to you that your tour will be safe, productive, and hopefully enjoyable.

Finally I would like to remind TFF 6A that we are responsible for the mission here until BG Wade and 6B take over. Do not let up on your demonstrated diligence to safety, and assist TFF 6B in every way possible. They are our legacy; if we do not pass on our hard-won lessons, then what we have done here cannot be carried on. That is a true sign that we have excelled in what we have done.

Thank you all for supporting the command and the mission. I admire your commitment and dedication and wish you a safe journey home to your loved ones. It has been an honor and a privilege to serve with you.

Promoting Peace! ★

*Brig. Gen. Tod Carmony
is commanding general of
Multinational Brigade East
and can be reached at
carmony@bondsteel2.aur.
army.mil*



Guardian

Produced for Personnel of KFOR Multi-National Brigade (East)

COMMANDING GENERAL, MNB(E)
BRIG. GEN. TOD CARMONY

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER, MNB(E)
AND COMMANDER, 364TH MPAD
MAJ. ERIC LARSON

PUBLIC AFFAIRS LIAISON OFFICER
PRISTINA
MAJ. JULIE FLOM

EXECUTIVE OFFICER, 364TH MPAD
1ST LT. WILLIAM GEDDES

DETACHMENT 1ST SERGEANT
1ST SGT. BRANDI SCHIFF

MANAGING EDITOR
STAFF SGT. JEFFREY DURAN

EDITOR/LAYOUT EDITOR
SPC. ADAM DIELSCHNEIDER

PHOTO EDITOR/WEBMASTER
STAFF SGT. TOMAS ROFKAHR

JOURNALISTS
SGT. BENJAMIN HOKKANEN
SPC. IAN BLAKE

PHOTOGRAPHER
SGT. STEPHEN GROVES

CAMP MONTEITH TEAM NCOIC
SGT. 1ST CLASS BILL BROCKBERG

MEDIA OPERATIONS NCO
SGT. MARY HAHN

BROADCAST JOURNALISTS
STAFF SGT. AARON SALZER
STAFF SGT. JIM SHANKS

ADMINISTRATIVE SPECIALIST
SGT. GREIG DAHLKE

PRINTING
DINOGRAP

Ferizaj, Kosovo

The GUARDIAN is an official publication of KFOR Multi-National Brigade (East) produced to provide command information to service members in MNB(E). Guardian is produced by the 364th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, Army Reserve. Contents of Guardian are not necessarily official views of, nor endorsed by the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, the Department of the Army or the 38th Infantry Division. Guardian is published biweekly using offset press by the MNB(E) Public Affairs Office, Building 1320, Camp Bondsteel, APO AE 09340. Printed circulation is 2,500.

Quicktime

Tell Your Army Story, Earn Money

The One Soldier's Story Project is accepting literary non-fiction personal accounts from U.S. Army Soldiers and veterans for publication in a book-length anthology to be published in 2006.

Any Army Soldier or Army veteran in service on or after Sept. 11th, 2001 is eligible, and those whose submissions are selected will be paid up to \$250 upon acceptance and up to \$750 upon publication. Submissions should run from 2,500 to 15,000 words.

Full details are available at www.OneSoldiersStory.com. There will be no cost, now or ever, to those Soldiers or veterans who submit a personal account for consideration.

The project is not a charity, and does not solicit nor accept monetary donations.

The One Soldier's Story Project is a non-partisan, privately-financed literary program seeking to publicize the efforts of Army veterans of the conflicts in Iraq, Afghanistan, and the entire worldwide War on Terror in a Soldier's own words. It offers a small financial incentive to those Soldiers willing to put their own accounts on paper, but more importantly a chance to tell that story to a much larger audience than their own friends and family.

"In twenty years, the war stories of the Soldiers and veterans of today will be clouded by age and fading memory," said Nathan S. Webster, Editor-In-Chief of The One Soldier's Story Project, and an award-winning former Army journalist. "There is no better time for these men and women to put their accounts on paper than

now, when those memories are fresh and vibrant, and will not be tainted by what an older version of themselves might want to be."

"The best part of The One Soldier's Story Project is that every Soldier who submits will at least have a story down on paper, whether it is accepted or not," Webster continued. "There is far more to the Army experience than any newspaper or news broadcast can tell, and it is a story often not told by those who actually live it. The vision of The One Soldier's Story Project is for the writing talent of the best of these Soldier-authors to be discovered and displayed."

The current closing date for submissions is Aug. 31. Updates on the status of the project will be posted directly to www.OneSoldiersStory.com.

Bondsteel Basketball Team Donates Winnings To School

This fall, four Soldiers from Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo played in the Ferizai/Urosevac three-on-three "streetball" basketball tournament, which was sponsored by local businesses, such as Radio Tema.

The Bondsteel team was composed of Spc. Floyd Jones from headquarters and headquarters company, 37th Brigade Combat Team, Sgt. Neil Ferdinand from Kosovo Inspectorate of the Kosovo Protection Corps, Staff Sgt. Christopher Springs from Task Force Medical Falcon, and 1st Lt. Larrier Walker, Jr. from G2 operations.

The CBS team placed third and returned that Sunday for the awards ceremony. The Bondsteel team was heartily welcomed and cheered by the other teams and the crowd.

At the end of the day, it's not whether you win or lose but how you play the game. One of the local children, Bajram, summed it all up in two statements: "You basketball good!" and "You are still champions."

On Nov. 30, the Soldiers involved with the tournament donated the game winnings to the Perperimi School in Lasko Bare.

The Soldiers purchased school supplies and a dumpster for the school, then made the donation to the school administrator.



PHOTO COURTESY OF 1ST LT. LARRIER WALKER, JR.

The Camp Bondsteel basketball team poses with children from Perperimi School in Lasko Bare.

Training at Atterbury

Story by *Spc. Ian Blake*

The lingering feelings of leaving loved ones behind mixed with the anxiety and anticipation of embarking on a deployment are felt by almost everyone.

This is how the story of Task Force Falcon 6A began its road to Kosovo by passing through the gates of Camp Atterbury, Ind. The journey began in the late spring for most of the task force, arriving at the Indiana National Guard base from all corners of the country. Here the training would begin in the form of classroom and practical instruction.

In order to fulfill their roles as peacekeepers, Soldiers had to gain an understanding of what they could and could not do.

To give the Soldiers the tools to complete their mission they extracted themselves from simulated mine fields, had to identify different types of mines, and learned about the rich and colorful history of the Kosovo region and the people they would be interacting with as peacekeepers.

In most cases, the classroom instruction took place outdoors for some

practical exercise. Soldiers had to self-extract themselves from a simulated mine field with a probe, move through a wooded area laced with simulated booby-traps (e.g. trip wires), and extract a wounded comrade from a minefield.

Soldiers completed a number of common task skills that all Soldiers should know, like disassembling and maintaining their assigned weapon, identifying unexploded ordnances, donning their protective mask in under nine seconds, and using a compass to navigate through forested terrain. After completing the common level tasks, Soldiers had to complete tasks from the upper skill levels. This included calling in a medical

evacuation, placing tactical guard positions, and overseeing personnel searches to name a few.

Not all of the training was confined to the classroom or in a field outside the offi-

cer's club. The most intense training the Soldiers received was their Theater Specific Readiness Training (TSRT). In this training, Soldiers had to go through simulations such as responding to indirect fire in squad formation, dealing with local nationals, conducting a four-person body search, and searching a vehicle. These skills were first taught in walk-through style with the instructors pointing out things along the way, but when it came time to test, the simulations took a more realistic turn.

When the training was finished, and after a brief break, the Soldiers of TF Falcon began a command post exercise (CPX). The CPX was a simulation of what operations would be like in Kosovo during an aggressive battle rhythm. This meant the action would be faster, harder, and hopefully more intense than what the real world operation would be. The simulations ranged from conducting patrols and raids in notional towns, to escorting notional congressmen.

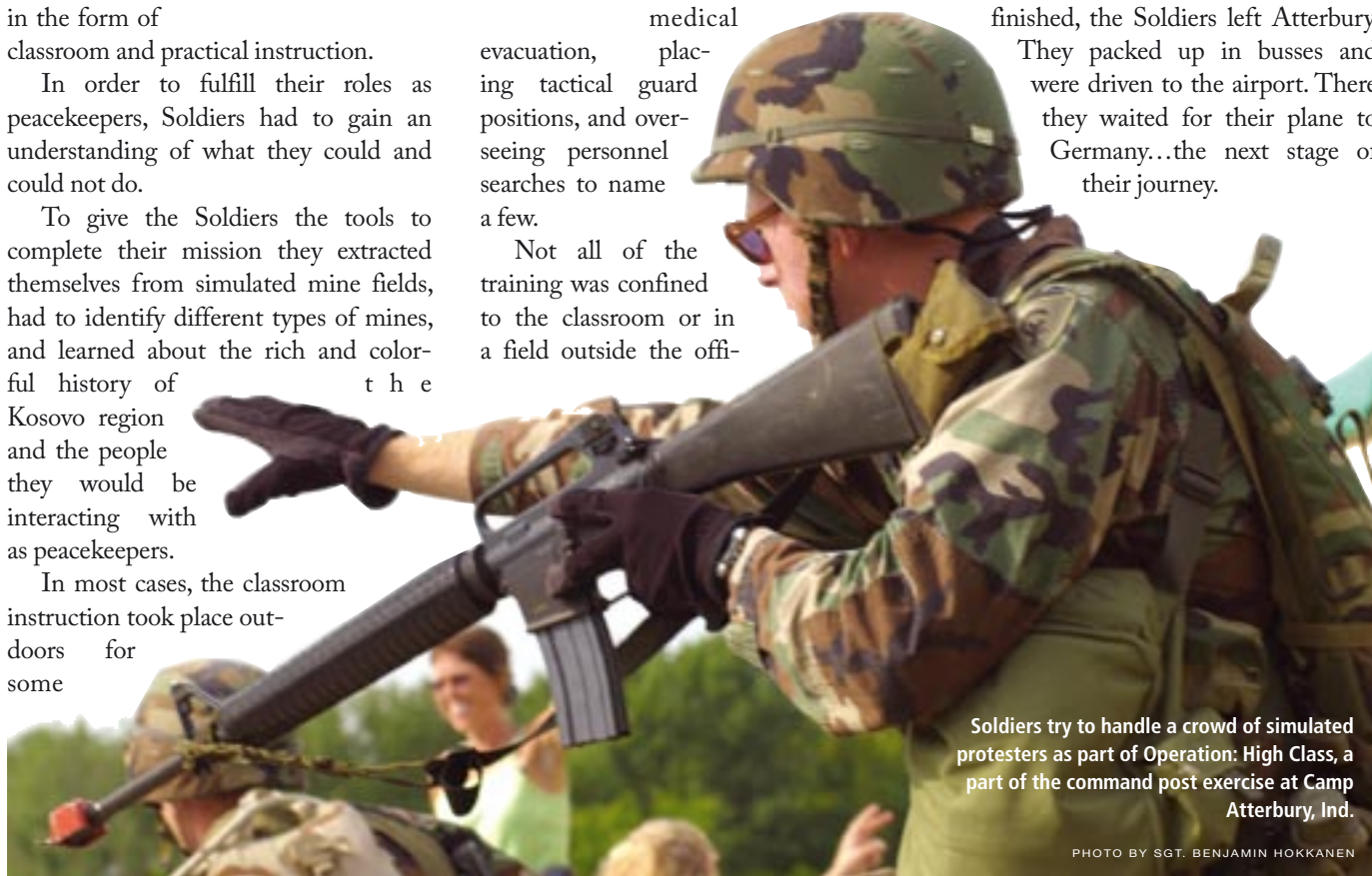
Once the classes and exercises were finished, the Soldiers left Atterbury.

They packed up in busses and were driven to the airport. There they waited for their plane to Germany...the next stage of their journey.



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. JEFFREY DURAN

A Soldier from Task Force Falcon takes a drink after completing training with her chemical protective equipment at Camp Atterbury, Ind.



Soldiers try to handle a crowd of simulated protesters as part of Operation: High Class, a part of the command post exercise at Camp Atterbury, Ind.

PHOTO BY SGT. BENJAMIN HOKKANEN



Soldiers practice chin locks as part of an unarmed combat class at Camp Atterbury, Ind.

PHOTO BY SPC. IAN BLAKE

February 9th, 2005

GUARDIAN

7

Training at Hohenfels

Story by Sgt. Benjamin Hokkanen

Between the arduous journeys to the bathroom, staying in the barracks during torrential downpours, and worrying about waking up next to a boar in your tent, this task force did a lot of training at Camp Hohenfels, Germany.

After the initial training we went through at Camp Atterbury, in the sweltering heat and with mediocre chow, we expected things to be looking up – little did we know how much we would be missing the chow after our first few meals at Hohenfels.

Some of us lived in tents; some of us lived in barracks. Some of us ate our meals at the dining facility; others won-

dered why Anthony's Pizza was never open and just how much more Popeyes Chicken & Biscuits they could eat.

Hohenfels allowed this task force to get a feel for what things might be like when we finally arrived here in Kosovo. The various task forces were able to separate themselves into their own areas, and Task Force Shield was able to move out to "tent city" at the notional Camp Monteith, Hohenfels-style.

All the task forces were able to overcome the adversities they faced in Germany to put together a fine month of training. Soldiers got another chance to keep the peace

PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. JEFFREY DURAN



PHOTO BY SGT. 1ST CLASS BILL BROCKBERG



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. JEFFREY DURAN

(Above) Spc. Joshua Oprisa, 734th Ordnance Company (EOD) works on his laptop computer in his barracks at Camp Hohenfels, Germany. (Right) A Soldier equipped with MILES equipment takes aim with his M203 grenade launcher during a simulation at Camp Hohenfels, Germany. (Next page top) A Soldier from 2-107th Cavalry, Task Force Lancer talks with a notional local in the simulated town of Vitina during a simulation. (Next page middle) A crowd of notional protestors is faced by Soldiers who are trying to restore order to the simulated town of Vitina. (Next page bottom) A Soldier tends a wounded local during a simulated exercise at Camp Hohenfels, Germany.



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. JEFFREY DURAN



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. JEFFREY DURAN

during political rallies, or if that failed, to quell the mock riots that may have ensued. Flight operations Soldiers learned to work with the Soldiers on the ground better, providing air reconnaissance during cordon and searches and demonstrations. We had the opportunity to work with translators and learn to overcome language barriers during meetings with local villagers or high-ranking meetings of leaders. Soldiers were provided with media training, and many of our top-ranking leaders were grilled by the Northrop Grumman media crew. Through it all we worked together, learning each step of the way.

Despite the things we all found lacking in our experience at Camp Hohenfels, one thing that we were able to find was some quality training – and a better sense of teamwork.



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. JEFFREY DURAN



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. JEFFREY DURAN

(Above) Fire fighters from the Task Force Falcon Fire Department respond to a fire at the fuel point. (Below) Brig. Gen. Tod Carmony speaks at the transfer of authority for the POLUKR BAT.

Task Force Falcon

Story by Sgt. Benjamin Hokkanen

With the rotation winding down for all of us here on the 6A KFOR tour, many of us are looking back at what has been accomplished here and examining the mark this rotation will leave on Kosovo.

When we first arrived at Camp Atterbury, the end of our deployment seemed so far away. Since that time we've seen the Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's all fly by, and now it's almost time to go home. Our time has been filled with training, missions and accomplishments of all sorts.

We've had synchronized patrols, over-the-horizon missions, vehicle checkpoints, medical civil assistance programs (MEDCAPs), veterinary

civil assistance programs (VET-CAPs), humanitarian assistance missions, school openings, cordon and search missions, weapons amnesty days, bridges tested, Expert Infantry Badges and spurs earned,



PHOTO BY MAJ. ERIC LARSON

NCOES courses graduated, multi-ethnic children's days, village councils set up, road projects, countless other patrols, and many hours spent reading, watching movies or playing

video games – whatever your poison.

"The mission here in Kosovo has been to provide a safe and secure environment and allow for the transition to civil authority," said Brig. Gen. Tod Carmony, commander Multi-National Brigade (East).

From Camp Atterbury to Hohenfels to Camps Bondsteel and Monteith and Film City here in Kosovo, this task force has come together as a team and executed the mission in a manner that has made Carmony proud.

"We brought people in here from 19 different states," said Carmony. "The training allowed us to come together as an organization and as a team.

We had excellent resources. The military did a very good job of providing us with the skills and giving us the experience that we needed so

Continued on page 12



PHOTO BY SPC. IAN BLAKE



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. JEFFREY DURAN

(Top) The ruins of a local department store located in Ferizaj/Ursosevac after a bomb exploded during a response by the 734th Ordnance Company (EOD). One Soldier and one civilian were injured. (Above) 1st Sgt. William Nelson, Headquarter Headquarters Company, flips hamburgers at the Task Force Falcon Organization Day. (Right) Sgt. Michelle White, 448th Civil Affairs Battalion, lines up with friends to prepare for a relay race during a KPS summer retreat.



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. TOMAS ROFKAHR



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. JEFFREY DURAN

(Top) Group photo showing Task Force Falcon in mass formation. (Above) Assuming the kneeling unsupported position, Sgt. Kevin Dyer pulls security during a primary leadership course exercise. (Right) Supportive locals show their gratitude and backing of the United States in a Sept. 11th parade in Ferizaj/Urosevac.



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. JEFFREY DURAN

(Above) during t
Force M

Continued from page 10

that when we got on the ground here we were pretty much ready for everything we would encounter."

After all the training was over, we arrived in Kosovo to take our turn at the wheel.

"Until you get here and talk to the people on the ground, you think that this is how it is and this is how you're going to fix it but then you get here and it is infinitely more complex than what you originally thought it was," said Carmony.

And since we can't fix all the issues in Kosovo in six months, it was important for us as a task force to have some specific goals to track our progress.

The first goal was to accomplish the assigned mission that we had here, which was to provide a safe and secure environment for the people of Kosovo, said Carmony. "The country needs us to accomplish the mission."

Another goal Carmony had was the advancement of the Kosovo police force.

"The police are pretty well trained in their basic schooling, but they don't have a lot of middle management experience and detective experience," said Carmony. "We've had a number of successful missions where we integrated the police and our Soldiers."

Of the many proud moments and accomplishments the task force has had here, there are a few that came

immediately to mind. One of Carmony's proudest accomplishments of this task force will be returning everyone safely to their civilian lives after completing the mission.

"I would rate our safety record [as our biggest success]. We haven't lost any Soldiers. That's a very important thing to be able to say," said Carmony. "The second biggest accomplishment has been our engagement of the local populations. I think we've done an excellent job of trying to understand the local people's issues and try to help them work through those."

"We have people coming back and farming land that they haven't farmed in five years," said Carmony. "We have some schools that are doing



US ARMY PHOTO



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. JEFFREY DURAN

A wreath is placed on the traditional helmet, rifle, and boots representing a fallen Soldier at the Veterans Day ceremony on Camp Bondsteel. (Right) Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas King, Task Force Medical Falcon, plays the bagpipes at the Veterans Day ceremony on Camp Bondsteel.

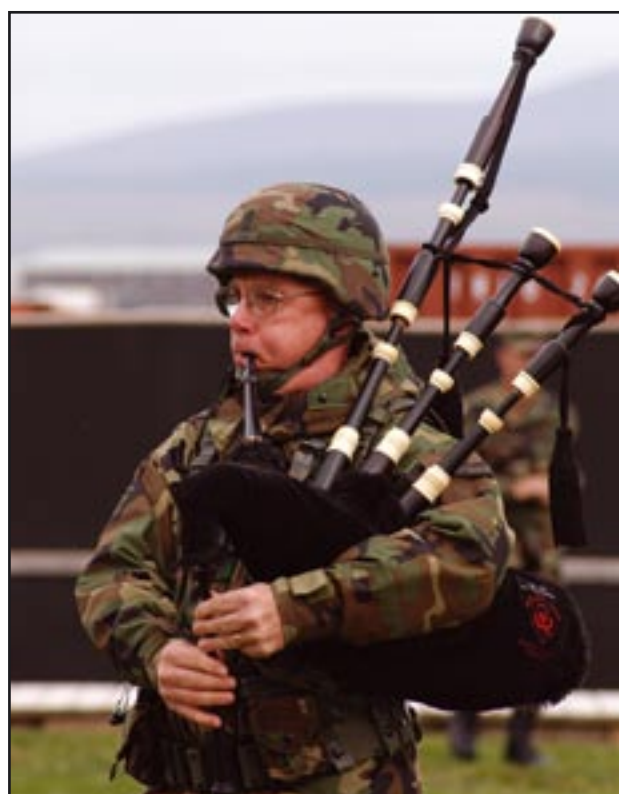


PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. JEFFREY DURAN

multi-ethnic education--that didn't exist before, either.

"Another one of the big things that the task forces did here was set up village councils. Getting people to organize and solve their own problems is something that our Soldiers have brought to this sector. I think that will outlive us long after we're gone."

Soldiers had to spend a lot of time performing operations along the Macedonia border performing vehicle checkpoints and watching for smuggling. A lot more time was spent on this than anticipated, said Carmony.

"Another thing that we have spent a lot of time doing is working out of our sector, where we take a company

from our brigade and move them to another brigade area," said Carmony. "We had a company move clear over to the western side of the province, and that company took over a battalion's mission while that battalion did their transfer and changing out. We wouldn't have anticipated doing something like that.

"We sent another company up to Mitrovice," said Carmony. "The citizens up there were very surprised to see American Soldiers because we haven't operated up there very much."

Because of these and many other outstanding accomplishments, Carmony wants all the Soldiers who served with this task force to take pride both in what we have been able

to accomplish for the present, and in the building blocks we have helped lay for the future of Kosovo.

"This has been one of the greatest events of my life," said Carmony. "The reason for that is because of what the Soldiers have done. They helped stabilize Kosovo and allowed it time to heal itself and move forward. We have stopped situations where people were going to get killed or hurt and that is very important. We have set conditions for education to be better here, the police to be better, and for people to feel safe in their homes. We need to be very proud of what we were able to do while we were here, because I think we were able to move the process forward."

Task Force Lancer

Story by Spc. Ian Blake

Before riding off into the sunset, the leadership of the 2-107th Cavalry, Task Force Lancer—Lt. Col. John Harris, squadron commander, and Command Sgt. Maj. William Belding—looked back on the accomplishments of the past rotation.

“Our goal was to leave our sector safer than we found it,” said Harris, “We increased confidence in civil institutions, and there were no major violent acts.”

These goals were met, as Harris said, by communicating the goals with the Soldiers. “We were relentless about being out in the community and interacting with the people.” He added that the locals were comfortable with his Soldiers.

Aside from meeting the goals set before them, Harris said TF Lancer’s greatest achievement was the leadership experience gained by his Soldiers.

“It’s so much higher now than when we began the rotation,” said Harris. “The trust our Soldiers have in their leaders has grown, along with the confidence of their leaders.”

TF Lancer has also left a positive influence on Kosovo during their stay. During their stay, Lancer had been able to install local leadership in their sector. “We’ve left things in place that will still be here long after we’re gone. It was hard work to gain the respect of the locals,” said Harris.

In order to be successful in their mission, the Soldiers had to be prepared. “Lancer was exceptionally prepared for our mission. The com-

PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. TOMAS ROFKAHR



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. JEFFREY DURAN

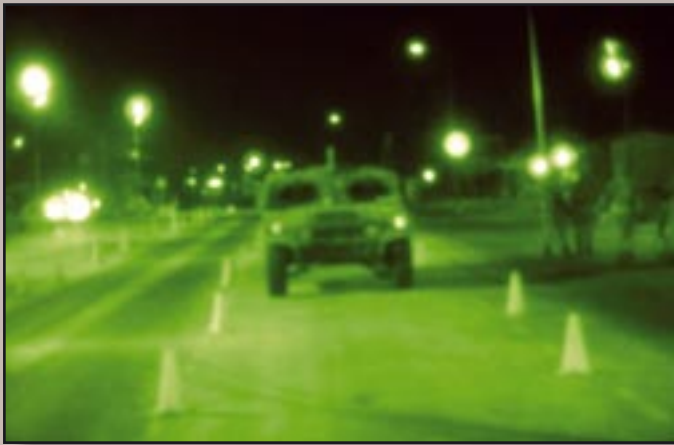


PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. TOMAS ROFKAHR

(Opposite page bottom) Soldiers from 2-107th Cavalry, Task Force Lancer apply camouflage as part of many common skills testing included in the 'Spur Ride.' (Above) Under the cover of darkness, Soldiers from Troop C, 2-107th Cavalry conduct a vehicle control point as part of Operation Toulouse Noose. (Right) Soldiers from Troop C, 2-107th Cavalry, Task Force Lancer make snow angels during a break in the action during Operation Toulouse Noose. (Background) TF Lancer Hummers roll towards the Macedonian border as part of Operation Toulouse Noose.



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. TOMAS ROFKAHR



mand post exercises had us working through the worst situations possible. That made the actual rotation kind of a let down, but we were prepared for the worst," Harris said.

Aside from being prepared, Harris said that he was impressed with the overall positive attitude of his Soldiers. "They were asked to do tough things, like guard a remote spot for hours in the cold, but they never whined about it. I was impressed by

their commitment."

"Whatever the mission was, our squadron leaders knew they had to do and they got it done," said Belding.

When the 2-107th returns home, their commitment to their mission in Kosovo will benefit their training for future operations.

"This deployment really emphasized individual readiness," said Belding. "When it comes down to it, being able to pass a physical fitness

test and qualify with your assigned weapon are the keys to success."

Whether their mission was to conduct reconnaissance, convoy operations, or simply patrolling the streets of a local city, TF Lancer has risen to each of those challenges. With the role of the cavalry becoming more and more ambiguous, one cannot deny that the cavalry continues to play a vital role in the success of the Army.



1st Lt. Scott Redinovich, Task Force Medical Falcon, tends to 1st Lt. Anthony Chenault, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, during a mass casualty exercise on Camp Bondsteel.

PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. JEFFREY DURAN



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. TOMAS ROFKAHR

Lt. Col. Monica J. Stafford, a dentist with Task Force Medical Falcon, works with a young patient during MEDCAP operations in Samakovo.

Task Force Med

Story by Spc. Ian Blake

Providing aid and comfort to the sick and injured is the mission of anyone in the medical field. The same can be said for the Soldiers of Task Force Medical Falcon. Their mission was to provide medical support to the personnel of KFOR, and secondarily, to give aid to local civilians, who may not always have the best aid available.

"Sometimes you don't know how good you got it until you see others that have less than you do," said Col. Stan Flemming, commander of Task Force Medical Falcon. "We've been blessed to use the skills and experience we have to do some good here in Kosovo. It further shows that we are a nation of caring people, and it has been an honor to serve here."

To meet their goals, Flemming said, "We trained to win: there's no other standard. It was a challenge, since our task force is an eclectic mix of Active Component, Army Reserve, and National Guard Sol-

diers from eight separate units and 16 states."

"Our ability to work as a cohesive organization is, in my opinion, our greatest accomplishment," said Flemming.

During their stay in Kosovo, TF Medical Falcon left a positive impact with the local population. "There is no question that our rotation has been well received," said Flemming. "Our rotation has accomplished more in six months than other rotations have done in a year."

He added that the greatest indicator of the positive influence was the gratitude of the locals. "When we helped a few local children, their parents told us that they were forever indebted to the United States for caring for their children," said Flemming.

To prepare for their mission, TF Medical Falcon deployed with TF Falcon as a whole for the first time, said Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas King. This allowed the Soldiers of the task force to create a greater

camaraderie with the Soldiers they would possibly be healing.

"The task force was very prepared for their mission. From aviation to the veterinarians to the medical staff, every one of them was prepared," said Flemming. "If they did not practice their skills in the civilian sector, then they trained extra hard to get their skills up to par."

The Soldiers of TF Medical Falcon were not only prepared with their skills, but also in the way they conducted themselves. "What impressed me about my Soldiers was their professionalism, their enthusiasm, and camaraderie," said Flemming. "They emulate the Army Values in everything they do, and they love their work."

"Our goal for this rotation was to support the commanding general and his initiatives," said Flemming. "We wanted to take a trained and ready force into theater and fulfill the operation of transitioning authority to the civil authorities and local health care providers."

(Bottom left) The Camp Bondsteel flight line at sunset during the early days of Task Force Phoenix's stay in Kosovo. (Bottom right) Soldiers from Troop P, 4-278th ACR climb into their OH-58D Kiowa Warrior during aerial M4 training. (Background) After completing a "hot" refueling, a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter from Task Force Phoenix prepares to land.



PHOTO BY SGT. STEPHEN GROVES



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. JEFFREY DURAN



Task Force Phoenix

Story by Spc. Adam Dielschneider

Like many of task forces that make up Task Force Falcon, Task Force Phoenix was not originally one unit back in the states, but many units that were brought together for this deployment. This presented both a main challenge and a main accomplishment of TF Phoenix for this rotation.

Not only is Phoenix comprised of units from Ohio, Tennessee and West Virginia, but the individuals in the task force come from all walks of life, said Col. James Lawson, TF Phoenix commander. "We've got full-time AGR (Active Guard/Reserve), full-time technicians, students, full-time professional pilots, and MEDEVAC (medical evacuation) pilots. But we came together the first day and focused on mission accomplishment."

Safety has also been one of Phoenix's focuses. During the past seven months, the helicopter fleet has flown about 4,000 hours, pumped 350,000 gallons of fuel, and performed about 12,000 hours of maintenance, and all that was done safely and professionally, said Lawson.

And what is most notable about the safety statistics is that the aircraft here have mostly been refueled in what is called "hot" refueling conditions, meaning that the aircraft is refueled while the engines are still running, said Command Sgt. Maj. Kenneth Fanty, TF Phoenix command sergeant major.

"That's tricky business," Fanty said, but the task force maintained high safety standards.

Individual growth and experience for the Soldiers was one of Fanty's goals. "We've been placing the junior leaders in situations where they need to be accountable to their

responsibilities," said Fanty. "I've seen a big development in them."

And as for experience, nearly every Soldier has had the chance the work with soldiers of other nationalities while deployed here—the POLUKR BAT, the Hellenic (Greek) 506th Mechanized Infantry Battalion, the Germans, Swiss, Italians, and French. If not for the multi-national environment, the Soldiers would never have had the chance to learn from other nations, said Lawson.

"Additionally, we've done some things that I consider even more important—we've adopted a school and an orphanage, and our family support group back home has jumped on that bandwagon," said Lawson. "The support has been pretty overwhelming—donations of school supplies, clothes, and diapers. I think we've made a pretty significant impact [on the people of Kosovo] in that respect."

Looking back on the past year or so of preparation for this deployment, Lawson said he owes most of the task force's accomplishments to the excellent training they performed back in the states. "Because of our good training, we have had no surprises here," said Lawson. "So far, everything we've encountered has been stuff we've trained for."

Perhaps the biggest challenge for Phoenix is yet to come, said Lawson. "Not everybody from our battalion deployed—there is still a big piece of our unit back home. We will have to be reintegrated into the unit back home and share our experiences with the people who didn't get deployed. We can say, 'Hey, this is how we did it in Kosovo.' It's going to be a bit of a challenge, but we're going to take the lessons learned here and continue to train as hard as we can."



PHOTO BY SPC. IAN BLAKE

Task Force Protector

Story by Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Duran

Even though Military Police are known for their speed traps both on base camps and throughout the Multinational Brigade (East) area, they carry out a variety of other important missions other than traffic safety.

"Understanding that the Military

Police are not always 'the bad guys' and actually bring a plethora of skills to the table is important, especially when you are not an MP, but have to work hand-in-hand with them," said Capt. Courtney Prewitt, Task Force Protector commander.

Prewitt added that being military police with Task Force Protector isn't just about being police officers. It's

much more than that.

"Many times interaction with the Military Police is viewed as non-positive. I think that for the Soldiers assigned to the task force have had a positive influence on the people of Kosovo and enjoyed their time in Kosovo," said Prewitt. "In conjunction, they have accomplished the difficult part of being a Military



(Next page top left) A Soldier from the 35th Military Police Company, Task Force Protector, fends off a police dog during a demonstration for local school children visiting Camp Bondsteel. (Next page top right) Sgt. Adam Spurgeon and Spc. Thomas Travis from the 35th Military Police Company, Task Force Protector, use a radar scanner to catch speeding vehicles. (Next page bottom) A Soldier from the 35th Military Police Company, Task Force Protector, demonstrates pressure points on a soldier from the Hellenic (Greek) 506th Mechanized Infantry Battalion during a riot control class. (Background) Soldiers from the 35th Military Police Company, Task Force Protector take part in a simulation in Camp Hohenfels, Germany.

PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. JEFFREY DURAN



PHOTO BY SGT. STEPHEN GROVES



PHOTO BY SGT. STEPHEN GROVES



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. JEFFREY DURAN

Police Soldier in enforcing the rules, regulations and laws governing the military and those working with the military.”

Despite the obstacles, Task Force Protector focused on being able to complete their assigned missions. Dealing with the integration was a challenge but one that everyone has to handle on occasion.

“What very few people understand about Task Force Protector is that there are Soldiers from at least five different MOS’s, eight different units and three different states. Task Force Protector was compiled at the very last moment and several (51 to be exact) combat arms Soldiers had to join the ranks of the Military Police,” said Prewitt.

“It was not a pleasure in anyone’s book, but there was very little complaining and very few integration problems,” said Prewitt. “I was extremely impressed with the ability of the Soldiers to adapt to an ever changing environment, overcome the difficulties of a deployment and accomplish the mission here in Kosovo.”

Despite the diversity of jobs, units and backgrounds, one of the main goals of the task force was to become a unit.

“Our first and most important goal was to build a cohesive team,” said Prewitt. “There were many, many roadblocks with late arrivals to

the mobilization station, personnel issues to overcome, and training those brother and sister Soldiers from other MOS’s about the Military Police mission. I think that the Soldiers stepped up to the plate, trained very hard and built a very viable team.”

Some Soldiers in the task force are well versed in their jobs because they carry the burden of multiple or extended tours.

“For many Soldiers this is the second or third deployment in a row,” said Prewitt. “Many Soldiers have been on some type of orders or deployment since the attacks on Sept. 11th, and the fact that many are still serving with the positive attitude that they are is a great accomplishment.”

“It is a hard thing for Leaders to have to tell Citizen Soldiers that they are going to have to put their lives on hold yet again, but these Soldiers have stepped up to any challenge and accomplished all assigned missions,” said Prewitt.

“I have had the pleasure to serve with great Soldiers and NCO’s for two back-to-back deployments to the Balkans, and I learn something new about the military and human nature everyday,” explained Prewitt. “The Soldiers are great, and seeing Soldiers who repeatedly tell me something is impossible succeed is even greater.”



PHOTO BY SGT. BENJAMIN HOKKANEN



PHOTO BY SPC. IAN BLAKE

(Top) Soldiers from 1-118th Infantry, Task Force Shield, help teach school children English. (Above) While sitting in his M2A2 Bradley, a Soldier from Company C, 1-118th Infantry, Task Force Shield prepares to participate in a firing exercise. (Background) Soldiers from Company C, 1-118th Infantry, Task Force Shield search a compound during a paintball training exercise.



PHOTO BY SGT. BENJAMIN HOKKANEN

Task Force Shield

Story by Sgt. Benjamin Hokkanen

Task Force Shield Soldiers have called Camp Monteith home for the past six months. Will they miss it now that it's time to go home? Probably not too much. Will they have fond memories of the place once they get to their real homes? Most likely.

One person who will carry fond memories of this deployment with him long after we have left Kosovo is Lt. Col. Gordon Ellis, Task Force Shield commander. This is because of all the hard work all the Soldiers of the task force put in and the way that they surpassed their goals.

TF Shield has exceeded Ellis' expectations during this rotation, he said. The task force completed a playground project in Ponesh, helped apprehend the most wanted individual on their list, gave every Soldier the opportunity to teach English in a local school, conducted Expert Infantry Badge qualification, and completed Bradley gunnery training.

"But there are three accomplishments that stand out the most from this rotation," said Ellis. "One is the number of weapons seized and the intelligence that was gained from the weapons and the ammunition that we seized. Right now we stand at 60 weapons and illegal ordinances seized during this rotation.

"The second accomplishment was hosting the three multi-cultural events. I think it's important for the future of Kosovo that there is some type of accommodation or methodology for the two major ethnic groups to get along, and I think we helped facilitate that. We wanted to host at least two multi-ethnic youth government days, and we achieved that. We are the first rotation in 11 to have three multi-ethnic youth events on post. We made history there.

"We also achieved something that we did not anticipate: we were the first U.S. military element ever to conduct a synchronized patrol operation with the Serbian army since the end of the conflict. Since then we've actually conducted three synchronized patrols, and we have one more scheduled.

"The other thing is that the task force received a very positive write-up from a reporter from the Washington Times. He noted the positive influence that our patrols were having on the population. I think we've developed a reputation for being a fair but focused patrol element in Kosovo.

"My Soldiers' ability to handle whatever is thrown at them on a patrol and to respond positively has been one of the things that has impressed me most. We were the only task force to have a patrol receive hostile fire during the deployment, and that patrol responded exceptionally well. That patrol ended with the apprehension of the individual who was shooting at them.

"They have done everything that was asked and then exceeded that. They have displayed the best of the American character every day. They operated with professionalism and compassion. They will be remembered long after we have left Kosovo. For me it was a great privilege to lead them and command them, and I will always remember with fondness the activities that occurred here in Kosovo, and what an honor and privilege it was to be the commander of Task Force Shield."

Parting Shots



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. JEFFREY DURAN